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An Open Letter To The Heterodox Baha'is

Through the instrumentality of Abdu'l-Baha's Will and Testament, He, the Center of Baha'u'llah's Covenant, became the "perfect Architect" of a divinely-conceived Administrative Order--the distinguishing feature of the Baha'i Faith. This sacred Document was acclaimed by the first Guardian of the Faith as "the inevitable offspring" from the Union of the Minds of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha. Hence, it was, as he said, "THEIR WILL": the "Charter of the New World Order" and the very pattern of the future divine civilization on earth.

The first Guardian said the Will of Abdu'l-Baha and the Kitab-i-Aqdas (Baha'u'llah's Most Holy Book) "are not only complementary but...they mutually confirm one another and are inseparable parts of one complete unit." The Will and Testament thus cannot be divorced from Baha'u'llah's laws.

As a part of the explicit Holy Text, the Will and Testament cannot be annulled, altered, or amended. Therefore, how can any Baha'i accept the doctrine promulgated by some that God changed His mind ("BADA") concerning the continuity of the Guardianship of the Cause, the foremost institution of the Will and Testament?

Indeed, to believe that Shoghi Effendi was unable or failed to appoint his successor is to place him in the position of being a party to the destruction of the World Order of Baha'u'llah. For, to put an end to the Guardianship--the very heart and center of the Cause--is to destroy also the two remaining supreme institutions of the Administrative Order which depend on the presence of a living Guardian of the Faith, namely, the Universal House of Justice of which the Guardian is "the sacred head and distinguished member for life" and the Hands of the Cause who are appointed only by him.

Shoghi Effendi publicly announced to the Baha'i world his successor as Guardian, but most Baha'is failed to recognize the appointment because of the manner in which the appointment was made and because of the qualifications they assumed his successor was required to possess. The language of Abdu'l-Baha's Testament reveals that it is mandatory for the Guardian to appoint his successor "in his own lifetime...that differences may not arise after his passing." However, because Shoghi Effendi was appointed the Head of the Faith in Abdu'l-Baha's Will, many people assumed that Shoghi Effendi would use a will to appoint his successor (a document that would be opened after his passing). They further assumed that only the Guardian's son could inherit the Guardianship. But Abdu'l-Baha's Will permits the Guardian to appoint another male believer whose fidelity and service to the Covenant of Baha'u'llah qualifies him to be a spiritual descendent or "branch".

The majority of believers were unable to perceive the manner in which Shoghi Effendi appointed his successor.

Some six years prior to his passing, Shoghi Effendi issued the only proclamation of his ministry on 9 January 1951, in a cablegram addressed to the "National Assemblies of the East and West." The cablegram established the embryonic Universal House of Justice. All Baha'is know that, according to the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha, only the Guardian serves as the "sacred head and the distinguished member for life" of the Universal House of Justice. Shoghi Effendi named a Baha'i of recognized unsurpassed service, devotion and fidelity to the Covenant of Baha'u'llah as the head or president of this embryonic body. Shoghi Effendi did not assume the presidency of this body himself and he did not permit the appointed head to activate the embryonic institution, so that on his passing the successor-Guardian-President of the Universal House of Justice would automatically assume active leadership of the Faith. Shoghi Effendi's appointment of an older man than himself was a veiled one, for it portended his own death in the near future.

Those who rejected Shoghi Effendi's successor erected an organization of their own making, for when they concluded that Shoghi Effendi had no successor, they thereby renounced their faith in the divinely-conceived Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha--the Charter of the World Order of Baha'u'llah.

The orthodox Baha'is adhere to a Faith that has remained unchanged since the days of the First Guardian of the Faith. They hope and pray that those Baha'is who have permitted themselves to be led astray and persuaded to abandon the divine Order bequeathed to us by Abdu'l-Baha will return to the Fold of the Covenant with the realization that the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and its glorious offspring, the "Child of the Covenant"--the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha--are indestructible and inviolable.

Further information may be obtained by writing to the Mother Baha'i Council of the United States, 3111 Futura, Roswell, N.M. 88201.

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